MARVEL
PSR 3
BENDIS
FINCH
MIKI
D'ARMATA
THE NEW AVENGERS
FINCH
fgd

It was the worst day in Avengers' history. The Scarlet Witch suffered a total nervous breakdown after losing control of her reality-altering powers. In the chaos created around the breakdown, many of the other Avengers were killed or hurt, both emotionally and physically. Without funding to keep going, the rest of the team quietly disbanded.

The criminal Electro is hired to infiltrate the high-tech maximum-security prison known as the Raft. He sucks all the power out of Manhattan and overloads the entire island security system, setting free eighty-seven of the most dangerous and powerful criminals on Earth. Who hired Electro to do this and who he helped escape is a mystery.

Trapped on the prison island are S.H.I.E.L.D. Agent Jessica Drew (a.k.a. Spider-Woman), blind lawyer Matt Murdock (a.k.a. Daredevil), Murdock's partner Foggy Nelson, and Luke Cage, Hero for Hire. They have come to see the most powerful super hero in the world, the Sentry, who is rotting in a solitary basement cell because he killed his wife.

When the city goes black, Captain America is already in a black ops S.H.I.E.L.D. copter, headed toward the island. He does not realize that Spider-Man has also hitched a ride. They are joined by the invincible Iron Man, and the battle seems to be going the heroes' way until the Purple Man, with his mind-controlling powers, confronts his old enemy Luke Cage…

BREAKOUT! PART THREE

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S.H.I.E.L.D. HELLICARRIER

THINK FAST, CAPTAIN AMERICA!

WHAP

THEY DIDN'T HAVE--

THEY DIDN'T HAVE SESAME SEED.

THIS IS FINE.

SO LAST NIGHT WAS ONE FOR THE RECORD BOOKS.

DO THEY HAVE A TOTAL ON HOW MANY ESCAPED?

FORTY-TWO AND COUNTING.

FORTY-TWO?!

FORTY TWO SUPER-VILLAINS BACK IN THE GAME. BUT WE DID KEEP FORTY-FIVE ON THE ISLAND.

42 VERSUS 45. WE OFFICIALLY DID THAT HALF-ASSED.

DO WE KNOW *WHY* IT HAPPENED YET?

ELECTRIC MUTANT OR THAT ELECTRO OR SOMETHING--INTEL IS GUESSING IT WAS A PRISON BREAK.

WE JUST DON'T KNOW WHO, OR WHAT, OR WHY YET.

WE'LL KNOW IN AN HOUR.

WHEN'S THE CITY GETTING POWER AGAIN?

AS SOON AS THEY DO.

FORTY-TWO.

NO VACATION FOR US *THIS* YEAR.

CAN WE TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT?

I THOUGHT WE WERE.

I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT WHAT WE WERE... WITNESS TO.

IT WAS CHAOS. IT WAS UGLY AND IT WAS--

LISTEN, JUST LISTEN...

TO START: LUKE CAGE.

LUKE WASN'T EVEN SUPPOSED TO BE THERE. HE CAME ALONG WITH MATTHEW MURDOCK.

NONE OF US WERE ***SUPPOSED*** TO BE THERE.

TRUE. I'M JUST PAINTING A PICTURE FOR YOU.

LUKE CAGE IS THERE. HE DIDN'T ASK FOR ANY OF THIS, AND--AND WHO DOES HE COME FACE TO FACE WITH? ZEBEDIAH KILLGRAVE.

THE PURPLE MAN.

THE PURPLE MAN. THE MAN WHO CAN MAKE YOU DO... WHATEVER HE SAYS.

THE WORST SERIAL KILLER THIS WORLD HAS EVER SEEN.

PLUS-- LUKE AND THE PURPLE MAN HAVE A HISTORY.

WE ***ALL*** HAVE A HISTORY WITH ONE OR TWO OF THOSE--

--NOT LIKE THIS.

DO ME A FAVOR. KILL ALL THESE OTHER ***"HERO"*** FRIENDS OF YOURS...

...AND THEN KILL YOURSELF.

I KNOW THAT GOD LOVES ME. THIS IS HOW I KNOW.

I FINALLY AM SHOWN A WAY OUT OF THIS HELLISH PRISON, AND ***YOU*** ARE THERE TO GREET ME.

I KNOW GOD WANTS THIS TO HAPPEN, AND--AND I DON'T EVEN ***BELIEVE*** IN GOD.

I PROMISE YOU THIS.

I PROMISE I WILL TAKE ***VERY*** GOOD CARE OF OUR DARLING JESSICA JONES.

AND YOUR BASTARD BABY CHILD SHE IS CARRYING.

KILLGRAVE?

YES, MISTER CAGE?

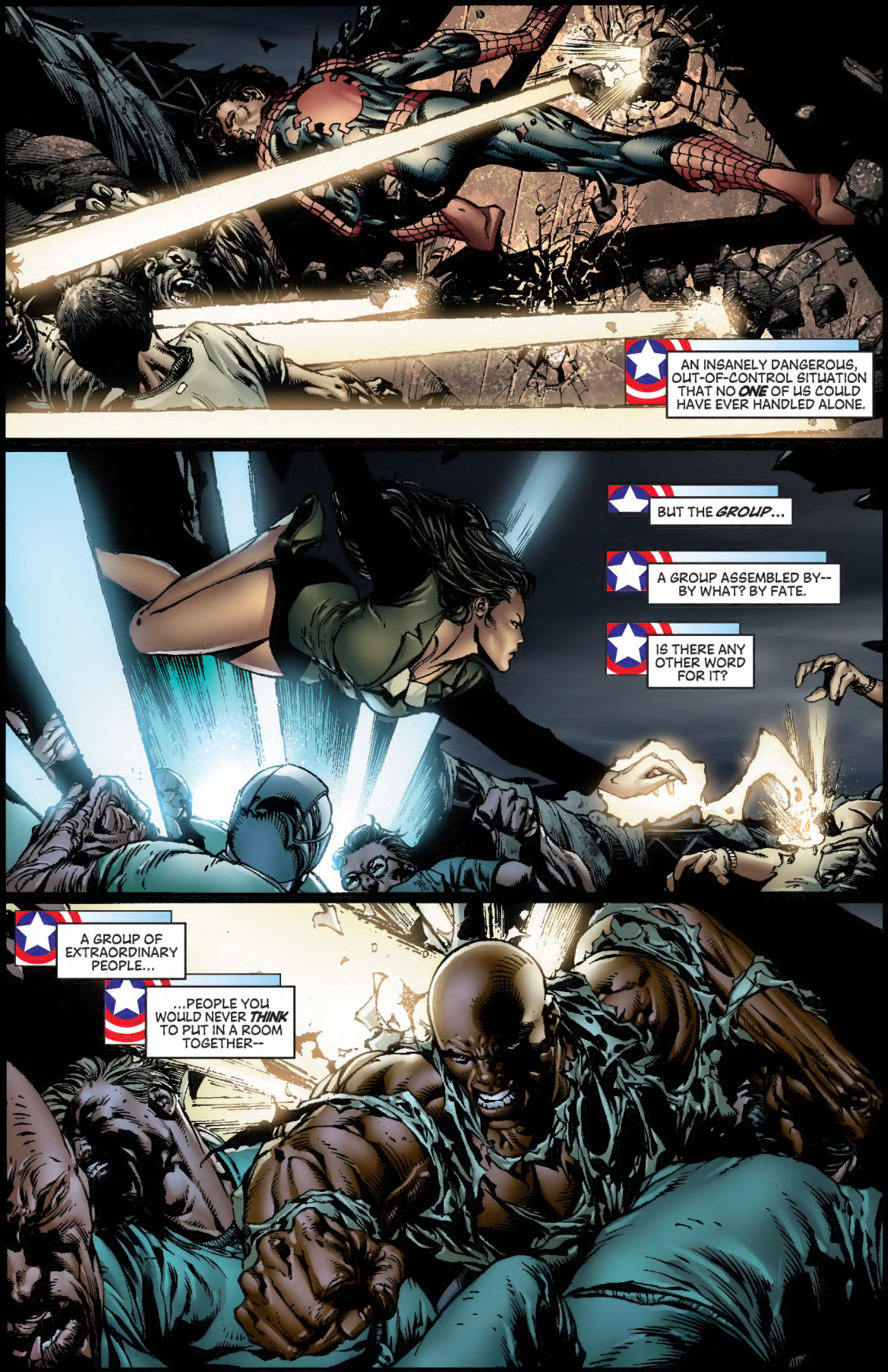
YOUR POWERS-- YOUR MIND CONTROL--

THEY DRUGGED YOU ALL TO HELL WHEN THEY LOCKED YOU IN HERE.

YOUR POWERS DON'T WORK RIGHT NOW.

WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO ME AND MY LIFE!
YOU THREATEN MY KID?
YOU SAY THAT TO MY FACE?!
ARRGGH!
FLUMP

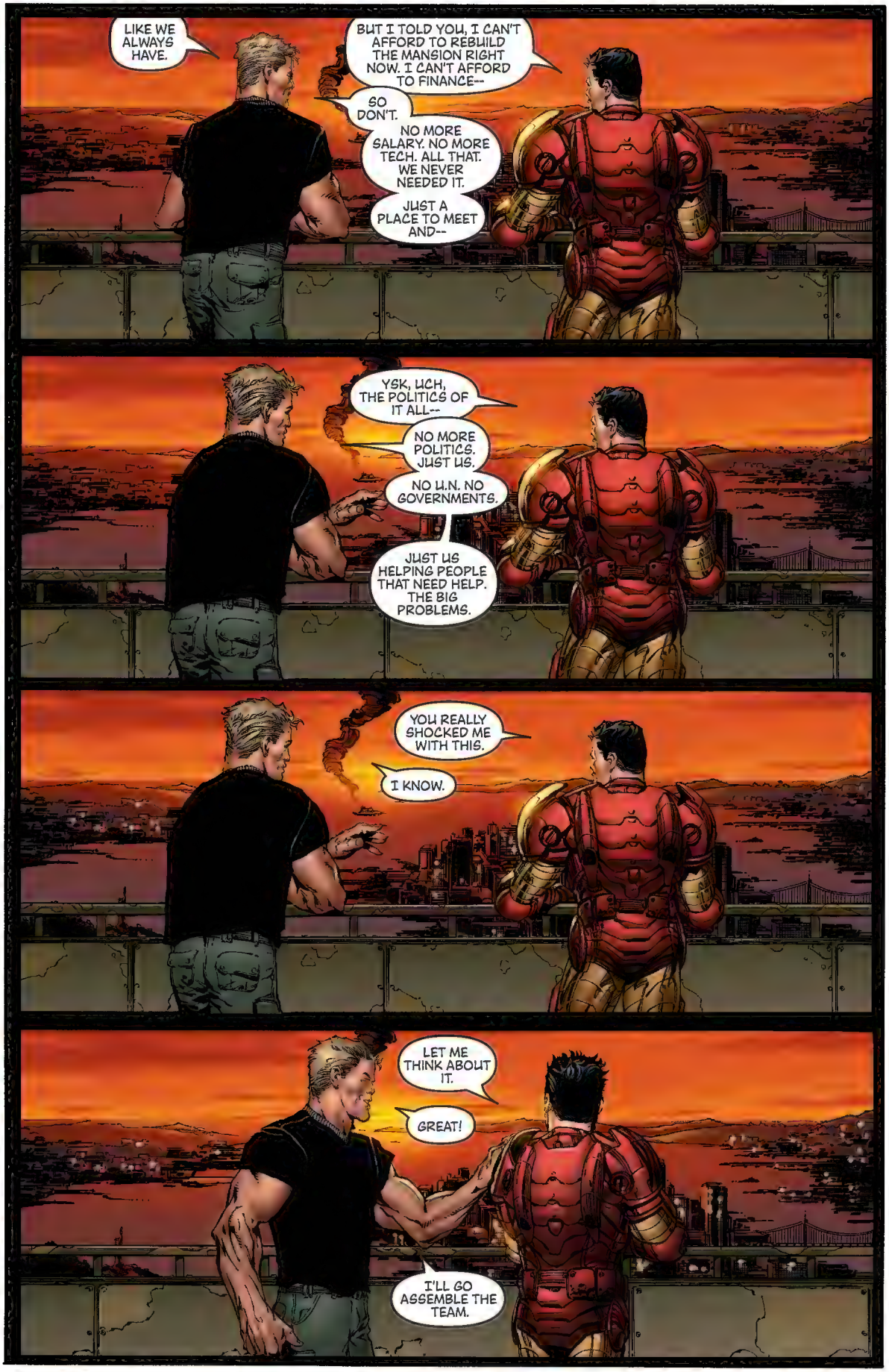
CAGE!
ENOUGH.
OKAY. OKAY.
GOOD MAN.
THANKS FOR THAT.
GENTLEMEN, IF I WERE YOU, I WOULD GET BACK IN YOUR CELLS!
YOU MEAN THAT'S ALL WE HAD TO SAY?
OKAY, OKAY, ALL RIGHT!
I GIVE!
OK, LETS WRAP THIS UP AND CALL IT A NIGHT!
DO YOU SEE, TONY? DO YOU SEE WHAT I AM GETTING AT?
YOU KNOW WHAT TONIGHT REMINDED ME OF?
A REALLY BAD RECURRING NIGHTMARE?
IT REMINDED ME OF THE STORY OF HOW THE AVENGERS FIRST GOT TOGETHER.


AN INSANELY DANGEROUS, OUT-OF-CONTROL SITUATION THAT NO ONE OF US COULD HAVE EVER HANDLED ALONE.
BUT THE GROUP...
A GROUP ASSEMBLED BY-- BY WHAT? BY FATE.
IS THERE ANY OTHER WORD FOR IT?
A GROUP OF EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE...
...PEOPLE YOU WOULD NEVER THINK TO PUT IN A ROOM TOGETHER--

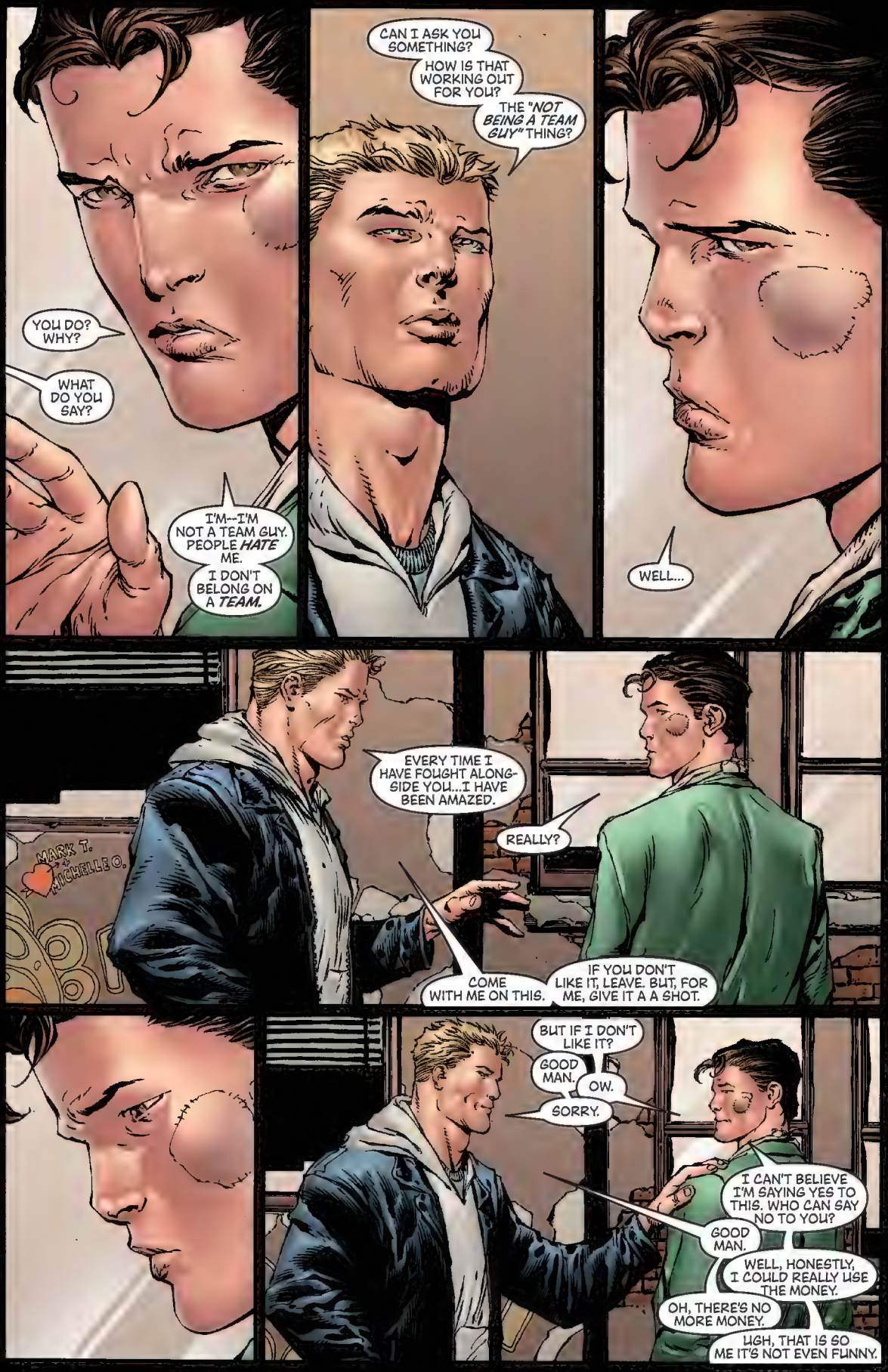
--PEOPLE WILLING TO TOSS ASIDE HOW MUCH THEY PERSONALLY HAVE ON THE LINE.
PEOPLE INSTINCTIVELY DOING WHAT THEY DO BEST.
GIVING NO PAUSE TO THE GRAVITY OF THE FIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM.
AND JUST WHEN YOU WEREN'T SURE WHICH WAY THE FIGHT WOULD GO...

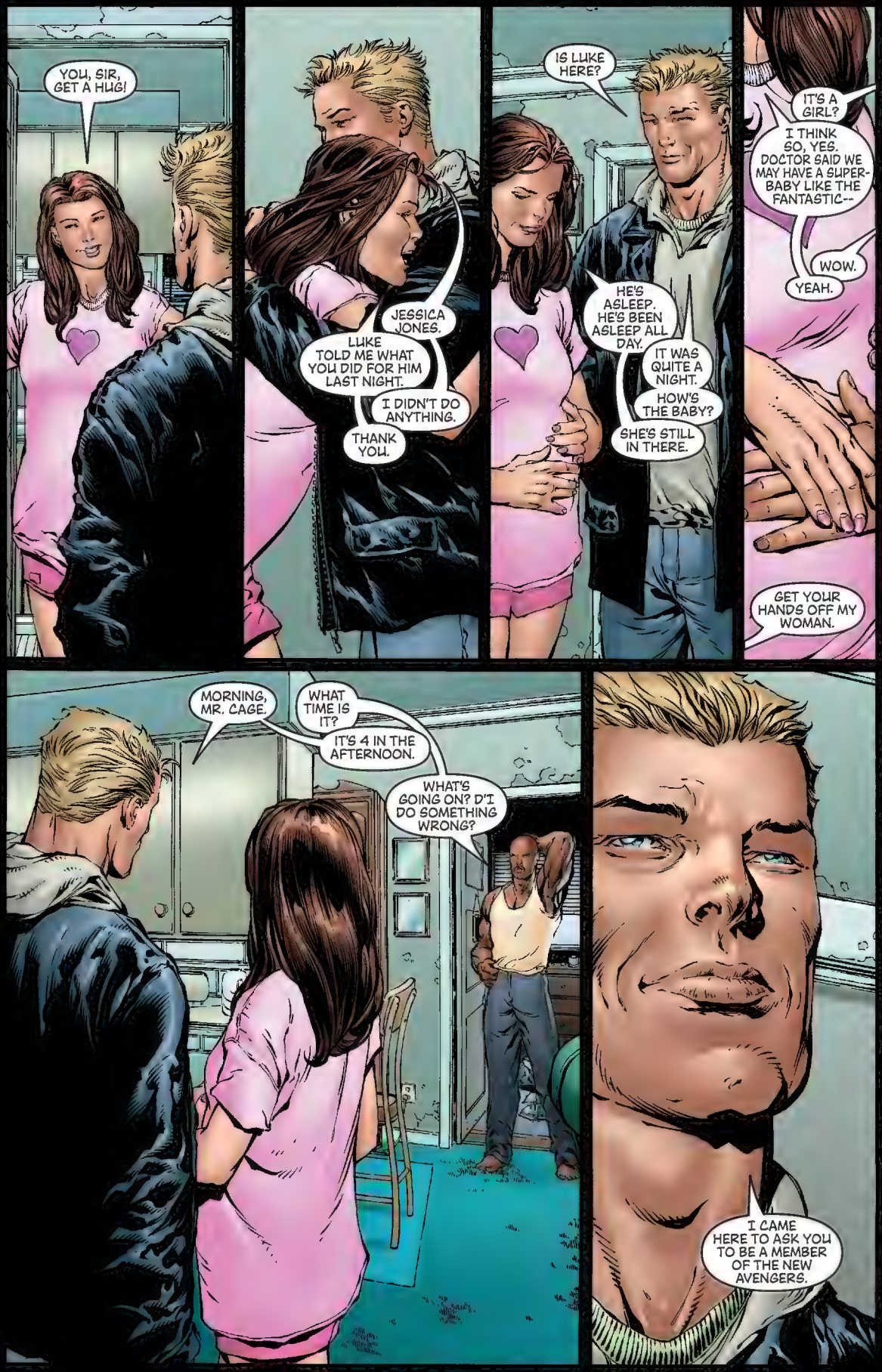
...THE TEAM COMES TOGETHER.
AND IT'S DONE.

YOU WANT TO ASSEMBLE A NEW TEAM OF AVENGERS?
I'M SAYING THAT THE NEW TEAM ALREADY ASSEMBLED ITSELF.
IT'S-- IT'S OVER, STEVE. IT'S--
JUST LIKE THE ORIGINAL... THIS TEAM CAME TOGETHER ON ITS OWN.
STEVE--
AND NOW THERE'S THINGS THAT NEED TO BE DONE. 42 OF THEM AND COUNTING. AND WE NEED THE TEAM TOGETHER TO DO IT.
STEVE, WE DON'T EVEN KNOW THESE PEOPLE.
YES, WE DO.
WHEN WE CLOSED THE MANSION...
LISTEN--THERE'S THIS-- A BALANCE TO THE CITY, TO THE COUNTRY, THAT WE, INADVERTENTLY, BY ENDING THE AVENGERS...
...WE THREW THE BALANCE OUT OF WHACK.
A TEAM NEEDS TO BE IN PLACE.
THINGS LIKE THIS-- WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT--
THIS IS EXACTLY WHY THERE NEEDS TO BE AN AVENGERS.
IF THE OLD AVENGERS DON'T WANT TO, IF THEY CAN'T, THEN LET'S TRY THESE NEW ONES.


LIKE WE ALWAYS HAVE.
BUT I TOLD YOU, I CAN'T AFFORD TO REBUILD THE MANSION RIGHT NOW. I CAN'T AFFORD TO FINANCE--
SO DON'T.
NO MORE SALARY. NO MORE TECH. ALL THAT. WE NEVER NEEDED IT.
JUST A PLACE TO MEET AND--
YSK, UCH, THE POLITICS OF IT ALL--
NO MORE POLITICS. JUST US.
NO U.N. NO GOVERNMENTS.
JUST US HELPING PEOPLE THAT NEED HELP. THE BIG PROBLEMS.
YOU REALLY SHOCKED ME WITH THIS.
I KNOW.
LET ME THINK ABOUT IT.
GREAT!
I'LL GO ASSEMBLE THE TEAM.

NYC
PDA
PS 108
YO, MR. PARKER. HAVE A GOOD ONE!
SUCH A SUCK UP!
SHUT UP!
OW, OW AND OW.
MR. PARKER.
NO WAY.
HOW'S THE ARM?
IT HURTS A LOT. HOW DID YOU FIND ME, CAP?
YOU HAVE A S.H.I.E.L.D. FILE.
UGH!
AND YOU LOST YOUR MASK IN THE FIGHT.
DON'T REMIND ME. THANK GOD FOR MY AVERAGE LOOKS.
YOU DIDN'T TAKE THE DAY OFF? YOU WENT RIGHT FROM LAST NIGHT TO WORK?
KIDS NEED A TEACHER.
EVEN ONE HALLUCINATING FROM PAIN AND SLEEP DEPRIVATION.
AM I IN TROUBLE?
WHY WOULD YOU BE IN TROUBLE?
AM I?
NO.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
CAME TO MAKE YOU AN OFFER.
LAST NIGHT WAS VERY INSPIRING, BUT AT THE SAME TIME IT CREATED A DIRE SITUATION.
WE HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO.
SO WE'RE PUTTING A NEW AVENGERS TEAM TOGETHER.
I WANT YOU.


YOU DO? WHY?
WHAT DO YOU SAY?
I'M--I'M NOT A TEAM GUY. PEOPLE *HATE* ME.
I DON'T BELONG ON A *TEAM.*
CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
HOW IS THAT WORKING OUT FOR YOU?
THE "*NOT BEING A TEAM GUY*" THING?
WELL...
MARK T. + MICHELLE O.
EVERY TIME I HAVE FOUGHT ALONGSIDE YOU...I HAVE BEEN AMAZED.
REALLY?
COME WITH ME ON THIS.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, LEAVE. BUT, FOR ME, GIVE IT A A SHOT.
BUT IF I DON'T LIKE IT?
GOOD MAN.
OW.
SORRY.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M SAYING YES TO THIS. WHO CAN SAY NO TO YOU?
GOOD MAN.
WELL, HONESTLY, I COULD REALLY USE THE MONEY.
OH, THERE'S NO MORE MONEY.
UGH, THAT IS SO ME IT'S NOT EVEN FUNNY.


YOU, SIR, GET A HUG!
JESSICA JONES.
LUKE TOLD ME WHAT YOU DID FOR HIM LAST NIGHT.
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING.
THANK YOU.
IS LUKE HERE?
HE'S ASLEEP. HE'S BEEN ASLEEP ALL DAY.
IT WAS QUITE A NIGHT.
HOW'S THE BABY?
SHE'S STILL IN THERE.
IT'S A GIRL?
I THINK SO, YES. DOCTOR SAID WE MAY HAVE A SUPER-BABY LIKE THE FANTASTIC--
WOW.
YEAH.
GET YOUR HANDS OFF MY WOMAN.
MORNING, MR. CAGE.
WHAT TIME IS IT?
IT'S 4 IN THE AFTERNOON.
WHAT'S GOING ON? D'I DO SOMETHING WRONG?
I CAME HERE TO ASK YOU TO BE A MEMBER OF THE NEW AVENGERS.

WHO ELSE YOU ASKIN'?
EVERYONE FROM LAST NIGHT.
WE DID KICK ASS.
MY POINT.
WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT? I'M GOING TO TELL YOU--
$%^& LIKE THIS, GROUPS AND TEAMS AND WHATNOT, NEVER EVEN OCCURRED TO ME TO BOTHER WITH IT.
BUT...
I SURE WOULDN'T MIND MY LITTLE GIRL GROWING UP AND HEARING HER DAD WAS AN AVENGER ONCE UPON A TIME.
WOULDN'T MIND THAT AT ALL.
OKAY. SURE.
WOW.
GREAT.
BUT LISTEN, I'M GOING TO WANT TO BE HEARD.
THERE'S THINGS I'M GOING TO WANT A GROUP LIKE THIS TO TRY-- NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS.
I WANT-- I WANT TO BE HEARD.
DONE.
AND BY THE WAY...

"...NO WAY IN HELL DOES MATT MURDOCK SAY YES TO THIS."
NO.
EVERYONE ELSE HAS SAID YES.
WHEN YOU INVITED ME TO BE PART OF THE OLD AVENGERS--I TOLD YOU:
MY LIFE AS DAREDEVIL IS A DISASTER RIGHT NOW. I'VE BEEN OUTED IN THE PRESS--
I KNOW.
AND I DON'T GET THE FREE PASS IN THE MEDIA YOU DO.
I'M IN A LOT OF TROUBLE. ALL OF WHICH I CAN AND WILL FIGHT.
BUT, AND THIS IS MY POINT, I WOULD NEVER, EVER, EVER KNOWINGLY CREATE A SITUATION THAT WOULD PUT YOU AND YOUR REPUTATIONS ON THE LINE.
AND I APPRECIATE THAT YOU DON'T CARE--BUT I DO.
I HAVE TO RESPECTFULLY DECLINE.
AND TRUTH TOLD, I CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE WHEN I'D BE ABLE TO FIND THE TIME.
SOMETIMES I LOOK AT ALL THE THINGS PETER PARKER DOES IN A MONTH, AND I HAVE NO IDEA HOW HE GETS IT ALL DONE.
OH.
OH, NO...
DO YOU KNOW WHO PETER PARKER IS?
YES. HE'S ON THE TEAM.
PLEASE DON'T TELL HIM I SLIPPED JUST THERE AND USED HIS REAL NAME.
JUST DO ME A FAVOR AND THINK ABOUT IT.

YOU SERIOUS?

CRACK KNK

YES.

ME?

YES.

WOW.

YOU IN?

I GOT YANKED OFF MY *S.H.I.E.L.D.* ASSIGNMENT.

I KNOW.

"TOTAL ASSIGNMENT FAILURE."

SEEMS THEY THINK I DID AN AWFULLY BAD JOB KEEPING THE RAFT INTACT AND SECURE.

AND THAT THE CIVILIANS IN MY CARE WERE PUT IN DANGER.

WASN'T YOUR FAULT.

WHOSE FAULT *WAS* IT?

FIRST THING ON MY "TO DO" LIST.

I THOUGHT I WAS GOING TO GET DECOMMISSIONED, KICKED OUT OF *S.H.I.E.L.D.*

THOUGHT FOR SURE.

YOU THE REASON I WASN'T?

WE'LL NEED A GO-BETWEEN WITH *S.H.I.E.L.D.* EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.

THAT WILL BE YOU.

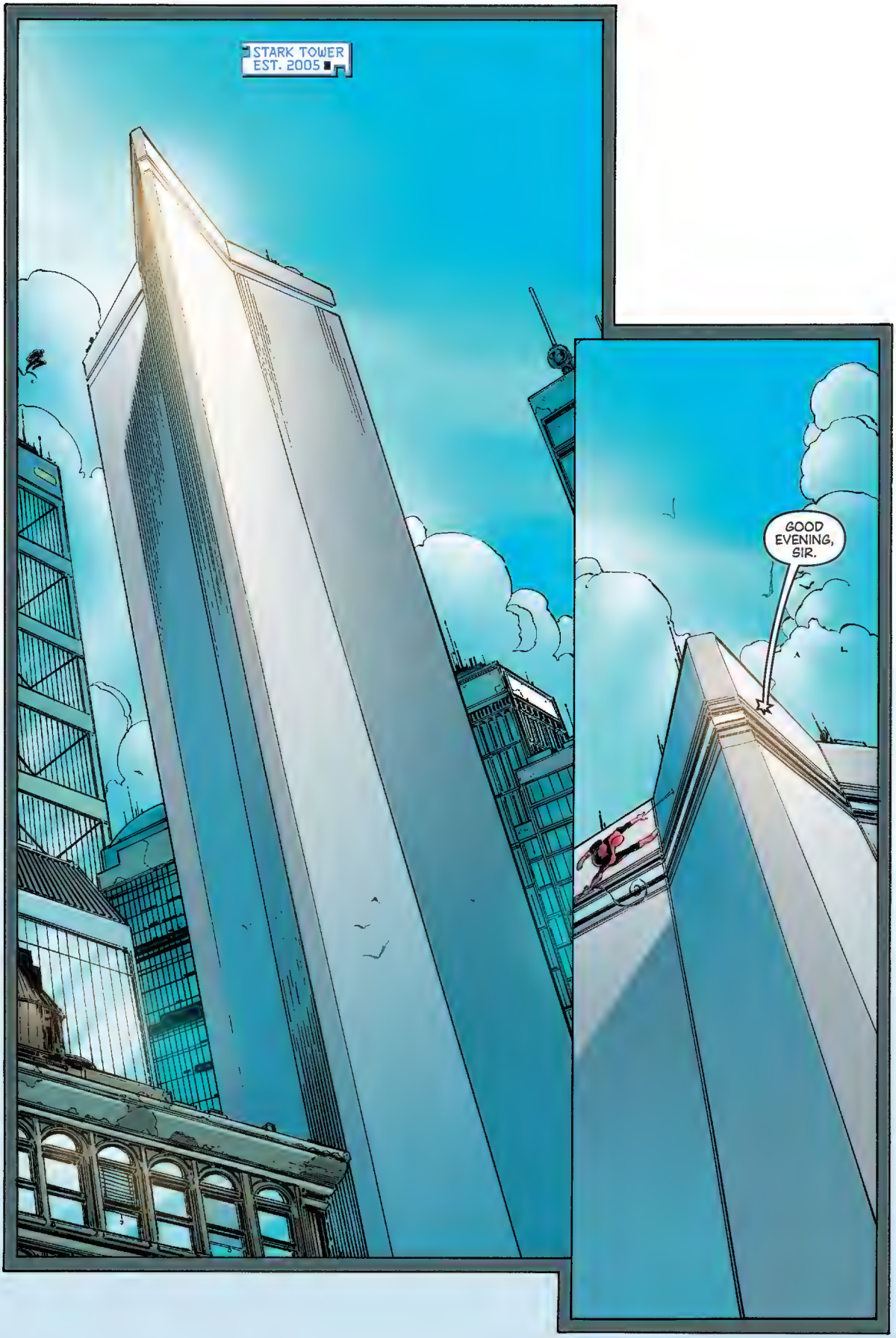
FURY'S OK WITH THIS?

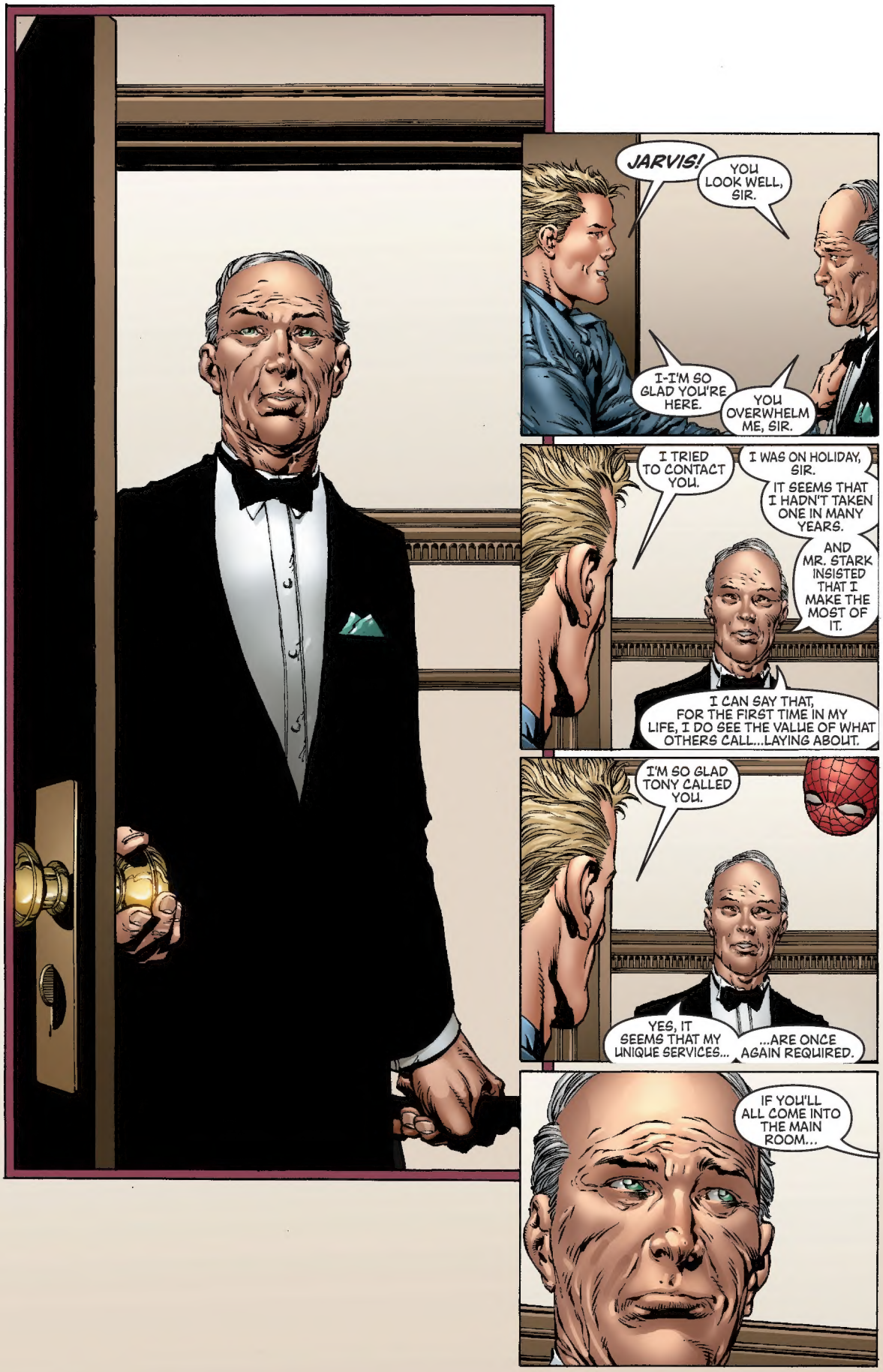
I DON'T CARE WHAT NICK FURY THINKS.

YOU REBUILDING THE MANSION?

NO.

WE *ARE* GOING TO HAVE A COOL CLUB-HOUSE THOUGH, RIGHT?


STARK TOWER
EST. 2005
GOOD EVENING, SIR.


JARVIS!
YOU LOOK WELL, SIR.
I-I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE.
YOU OVERWHELM ME, SIR.
I TRIED TO CONTACT YOU.
I WAS ON HOLIDAY, SIR.
IT SEEMS THAT I HADN'T TAKEN ONE IN MANY YEARS.
AND MR. STARK INSISTED THAT I MAKE THE MOST OF IT.
I CAN SAY THAT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, I DO SEE THE VALUE OF WHAT OTHERS CALL...LAYING ABOUT.
I'M SO GLAD TONY CALLED YOU.
YES, IT SEEMS THAT MY UNIQUE SERVICES...
...ARE ONCE AGAIN REQUIRED.
IF YOU'LL ALL COME INTO THE MAIN ROOM...

...WELCOME TO STARK TOWER.
I HAVE BEEN BUILDING THIS BUILDING--A GLEAMING BEACON OF MODERN ARCHITECTURE--FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS.
ONE OF THE DREAM PROJECTS OF MY LIFE, AND HERE IT IS.
THE TOP THREE FLOORS HERE WERE GOING TO BE MY NEW HOME, BUT THEY'RE MY GIFT TO YOU.
THIS IS YOUR HOME IF YOU NEED IT. THIS IS WHERE WE WILL MEET. THIS IS WHERE WE WILL PLAN.
I WON'T LIE TO YOU, I'M NOT COMPLETELY SOLD ON THIS IDEA.
THIS NEW TEAM.
IT'S NOT AN *INSULT* TO ANY OF YOU, BUT AS YOU ARE ALL AWARE, THE *LAST* AVENGERS DIDN'T END WELL AND IT--WELL, IT'S STILL UNDER MY SKIN.
BUT I'VE LEARNED TO LISTEN TO CAPTAIN AMERICA'S GUT INSTINCTS.
AND IF HE WANTS THIS TEAM TO BE, THEN I WILL HELP ANY WAY I CAN.
OK!
FIRST LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT.
UM, BEFORE YOU GET INTO THAT, I HAVE, LIKE, 76 QUESTIONS?
ACTUALLY...
YOU KNOW WHAT? JESSICA DREW ISN'T HERE YET.
WE SHOULD WAIT FOR HER.

I HAD A DAY.
I HEARD.
I GOT FIRED FROM MY S.H.I.E.L.D. POST AND ASKED TO BE A NEW AVENGER ALL IN ONE DAY.
THAT'S A HELL OF A DAY.
YOU PROMISE YOU GUYS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED ON THE RAFT?
THAT WAS NOT US.
'CAUSE I ALMOST DIED LAST NIGHT--THREE DIFFERENT TIMES...
IF WE WANTED TO KILL YOU--
NICE. THANKS.
THIS NEW SITUATION IS *VERY* INTERESTING.
I'M GOING TO BE AN AVENGER. WHO WOULD'A THOUGHT?
SAME DEAL AS BEFORE?
UH-UH.
NO. NO.
THIS IS GOING TO *COST* YOU.
THIS IS AN *ENTIRELY* DIFFERENT SITUATION.
YOU WANT ME TO REPORT BACK TO YOU ON THIS *AND* ON S.H.I.E.L.D.?
THAT'S GOING TO COST YOU.
ALL RIGHT, HOW MUCH?
TO BE CONTINUED...

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!

Before we kick off this installment of "Avengers Assemble," I'd like to take two seconds to acknowledge that the comics industry lost its grandfather this past week as of this writing. Will Eisner died on January 3, 2005. For those of you who don't know his work, next time you're in your local comic shop, treat yourself to his original graphic novel, *Minor Miracles* or his first volume of *The Spirit*, potentially THE MOST INFLUENTIAL strip in all of comics history. These were genius at the time of their printing, and there isn't a single writer or artist working in comics today who hasn't been influenced by Will's gifts to the craft.

And now, on to your letters. We've been swamped by fan mail in the two days since NEW AVENGERS #2 hit the stands, and it's still piling up. Here's a healthy first dose…

NEW AVENGERS,

I just got through reading issue #2 of the NEW AVENGERS, and I hate to bite off the McDonald's commercial, but…I'm Lovin' It! The artwork is great, naw, scratch that, the artwork is awesome, it's some of the best I have seen in a long time, and the story is the !#*$&*! Bendis, Finch, Miki, D'Armata, y'all some bad boys, for real! I am a firm believer that I should not have to sacrifice story for art, or art for story. In the NEW AVENGERS, I have found both! I read the letters page of "Avengers Assembled" and there are a lot of people hatin' on "Avengers Disassembled" and this new piece of cool y'all call the NEW AVENGERS. Those guys have got to quit drinking that Hatorade and eatin' nostalgia sandwiches!

I can understand them complaining if they want the same Gerber's baby food fed to them over and over again without any change in the taste, texture, or smell each month! I can understand their crying because they want their comics simple, with the good guys always winning and never losing! But this NEW AVENGERS ain't baby food, the NEW AVENGERS has grown up, and is now feeding its fans steak and potatoes! The characters are not new to the super hero biz, but a little new to the famed pages of THE AVENGERS. These heroes have evolved through their experiences, their wins, and, yes, their losses. For a long time I didn't read the "super heroes in tights" comics because there were no surprises and the heroes made it look easy. I bet nobody reading issue #2 of the NEW AVENGERS would have thought they'd see Spidey get that arm broke by Jigsaw! Oh my god, that was the !@#$*! But true to form, Spidey fought through the pain, and kept going. That's why we love him! Ain't nothin' comin' easy in the pages of the NEW AVENGERS and that's great! This new style ain't no sippin' tea! You have to guzzle this cup of Kool-Aid, and let it burn as it goes down. It's good stuff!

I realize after reading some of the comments by others that they feel let down and may not read AVENGERS anymore. Well, so sad, so sorry, see ya! Bendis and crew, you may lose a couple of fans, but if you guys refuse to bend to the crocodile tears of those who wish to hold back the greatness I have read and seen so far in the NEW AVENGERS and you continue to produce the same style of artwork and writing on each page, then don't worry, you picked up a new fan, and I'm sure there are many more out there that are tasting the AVENGERS again for the first time like a bowl of Kellogg's Cornflakes and totally lovin' IT!

Make mine Marvel and the NEW AVENGERS!

Chad Jones
Aurora, CO

Okay, that was WAY too enthusiastic not to print. Thanks for chiming in, Chad, and I've already contacted McDonald's headquarters. Your check should be arriving soon.

Dear Avengers Crew,

I've just read NEW AVENGERS #2, and in particular, the letters page. Seems the changes you all have made have quite a few people upset, and I just wanted to add my two cents. I am new to the series, in fact issue #500 of the AVENGERS was the first I've read, and only because the guy at the comics store insisted I get it. Perhaps it's because I had no preconceived notions of these characters' relationships, but I found the epic story fascinating and was instantly hooked. Emotional and beautifully told, if perhaps a bit disjointed. So many seem to be complaining about the way it ended, but I think it's good to shake things up once in a while to keep things fresh and interesting. Certainly after 500 issues that's going to be hard to do! But I applaud your bravery and confidence, and I think all the dissapointment is going to fade in light of the first NEW AVENGERS story. Talk about an entrance! Issues #1 and #2 have both left me gasping for breath! Wow. The new issue can't possibly come fast enough—seeing how this great new team unfolds will be a joy. Great, great work, guys. You've earned a loyal reader.

Zina Brown
Brooklyn, NY

Now this is more like it!

Greetings, Marvel,

Of all the years collecting comics, I've never felt the need to write a letter until now. I just finished NEW AVENGERS #2 and I think it's probably the finest single issue super hero comic I have ever read. Giving Mr. Bendis this series was a paramount idea in a "House of Ideas." I hope that this will give some of the fans with negative feelings about recent changes in the AVENGERS an excuse to look into other great titles that they might have previously overlooked. Specifically, ALIAS and THE PULSE because they have crucial information on characters like Luke Cage, the Purple Man, and their unfortunate connection. Keep up the great work and at this point if you publish Mr. Bendis' laundry list, I will buy it!

John Auble
Oceanside, CA

You know, John, it's usually my job to plug the other books. But you've clearly got a knack for it, so please don't forget that everyone should run out and pick up THE SENTRY trade paperback to find out his origin (and it's by Paul Jenkins and Jae Lee!) while supplies last. And to be as clear as possible, if you enjoy these characters and Bendis' writing, be sure to pick up SECRET WAR #s 1-3 (all currently on sale) for a look at many of these characters together for the first time! Luke Cage regularly appears in THE PULSE (on sale now!). And if you're old enough to purchase MAX titles, Jessica Drew a.k.a. Spider-Woman was last seen in the trade paperback ALIAS vol. 3 "THE UNDERNEATH" and Purple Man and Luke Cage's relationship is clearly defined in the final ALIAS trade paperback, ALIAS vol. 4 "THE SECRET ORIGIN OF JESSICA JONES" (both still available!). Okay, I'm totally shameless, I know, but if you're interested, there it is.

Dear AVENGERS ASSEMBLE:

When I read the editorial response to Raul S. Sanchez's letter, my jaw dropped. I've NEVER seen such a disrespectful response to a(n obviously) long-term fan. Could it be that the anger came because that fan's comment contained some truth to it? I myself was less than satisfied with the "Disassembled" storyline, which I found to be all steak and no sizzle (and seemingly forced, not character-driven), but was willing to give the new approach a chance. This callousness on the part of the editorial staff has caused me to rethink my open-mindedness. If you strongly disagree with the guy, don't print the letter. The response seriously lacked class, and put all readers on notice that they are disposable. We're all firmly aware now that Marvel, not the fans, owns the characters, and that they will be openly disrespected if they do not jump on board. Lots of good owning characters will do if all the fans jump ship. As I said, either ignore the letter or deal with it respectfully.

You have four months to print an apology to that reader; otherwise, I'm joining him out of disgust with editorial crassness.

Sean D. Memolo
(Via email)